

[From Summer 2002]

National Fishing and Boating Week

The weekend of June 1 & 2 was a special weekend on the beaches of Assateague Island. A breeze cooled the skin under the sun's warming rays. The sounds of the rolling surf calmed the spirit of anyone within its reach. Thousands of people flocked to Assateague Island to soak in all that the weekend had to offer - one of which was National Fishing and Boating Week festivities.

National Fishing and Boating Week aims to create awareness about the wildlife-dependent recreation of fishing and provides information about ethical and safe practices to sport. A tent was set up at the pony corral with informational brochures regarding fishing and the weekend's activities. Forty seven visitors participated in theme events which included: an Earlybirds walk on Saturday morning which emphasized the fishing skills of many birds; a clamming and crabbing demonstration illustrating the techniques of becoming a skilled shell fisherman/woman; and Make It/Take It activities creating fish buttons and printings.

The weekend also offered "A Special Event for Special People" sponsored by the Assateague Federation of Mobile Sport fisherman (AFMS). The event was aimed at teaching people with mental and physical disabilities to surf fish. The AFMS organized the event in conjunction with the event's cosponsors: Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, Tyson Foods, and Assateague Island National Seashore. AFMS provided volunteers to instruct the participants in the techniques of surf fishing. Each participant received a lunch sack cooler filled with goodies such as a T-shirt, floatable key chains, a saltwater fishing coloring book, and a tackle box courtesy of Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge. After the event, participants were treated to lunch at Memorial Park courtesy of Tyson Foods.

In all, the weekend attracted more than 10,200 people to the refuge.

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